

May 16, 2005 Last week I had an opportunity to present the case against US membership in the World Trade Organization at a seminar in Washington. Later this summer Congress will have a similar opportunity to raise objections about the WTO when several colleagues and I bring a resolution to the House floor seeking the wholesale withdrawal of the US from the organization. The World Trade Organization by its own admission is not just about trade. According to the WTO website, liberalizing trade actually takes a back seat to its more activist ambitions, such as “development”-- a euphemism for wealth-transfers from rich nations to poor nations. Likewise, their own website promises that, “In the WTO, commercial interests do not take priority over environmental protection.” In 1994 the WTO created the Trade and Environment Committee to bring “environmental and sustainable development issues into the mainstream of WTO work.” What does this mean? It would not take much imagination to tie any environmental issue to trade and thus invite WTO meddling. What about the Kyoto Accords, the international agreement that aims to solve the supposed problem of global warming? Clearly the Kyoto Accords, to which the United States has not agreed, will affect world trade. Will this be an open door for the WTO to act as enforcer toward the United States and other countries that refuse to sign Kyoto? Two leading UN observers, Henry Lamb of Sovereignty International and Cathie Adams of Texas Eagle Forum, have reported that the WTO is widely recognized as the enforcement tool of choice for the Kyoto treaty. Even Newt Gingrich, a supporter of American membership in the WTO, recognized in 1994 that far more than trade rules were at stake: I am just saying that we need to be honest about the fact that we are transferring from the United States at a practical level significant authority to a new organization. This is a transformational moment. I would feel better if the people who favor this would just be honest about the scale of change.... This is not just another trade agreement. This is adopting something which twice, once in the 1940s and once in the 1950s, the U.S. Congress rejected. I am not even saying that we should reject it; I, in fact, lean toward it. But I think we have to be very careful, because it is a very big transfer of power. In reality, the WTO is the third leg of the globalists’ plan for a one-world, centrally-managed economic system. The intention behind the creation of the WTO was to have a third institution to handle the trade side of international economic cooperation, joining two institutions created by Bretton Woods, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. For the United States to give up any bit of its sovereignty to these unelected and unaccountable organizations is economic suicide. International organizations can never “manage” trade better than it naturally occurs in a true free market of goods and services. At best, WTO acts as a meddling middleman, taking a cut for unnecessary services provided. At worst, it forces the United States to change its domestic laws in ways that seriously harm our economy and our sovereignty. Economist Murray Rothbard said it best: You don’t need a treaty to have free trade. Governments and quasi-government bodies like the WTO can only politicize and interfere with the natural flow of goods and services across borders. When we cede even a fraction of our sovereignty to an organization like the WTO, we can hardly hope to become more prosperous or more free.